

Psychology Café

FREE

ISSUE TWO
/ 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

HAPPY 1st BIRTHDAY

Psychology Café® & Milk Bar®

BEATING THE BLUES

Exposé on Depression

COFFEE TO GO

Salt 106.5: Psychology Café® On Air

PSYCHOLOGY ON THE FRONTLINE

Spotlight on Africa & the Middle East

PSYCHOLOGY ON THE HOME FRONT

Mental Health in Rural Australia

WAIT, WHAT?

The Tempest in the Temple

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

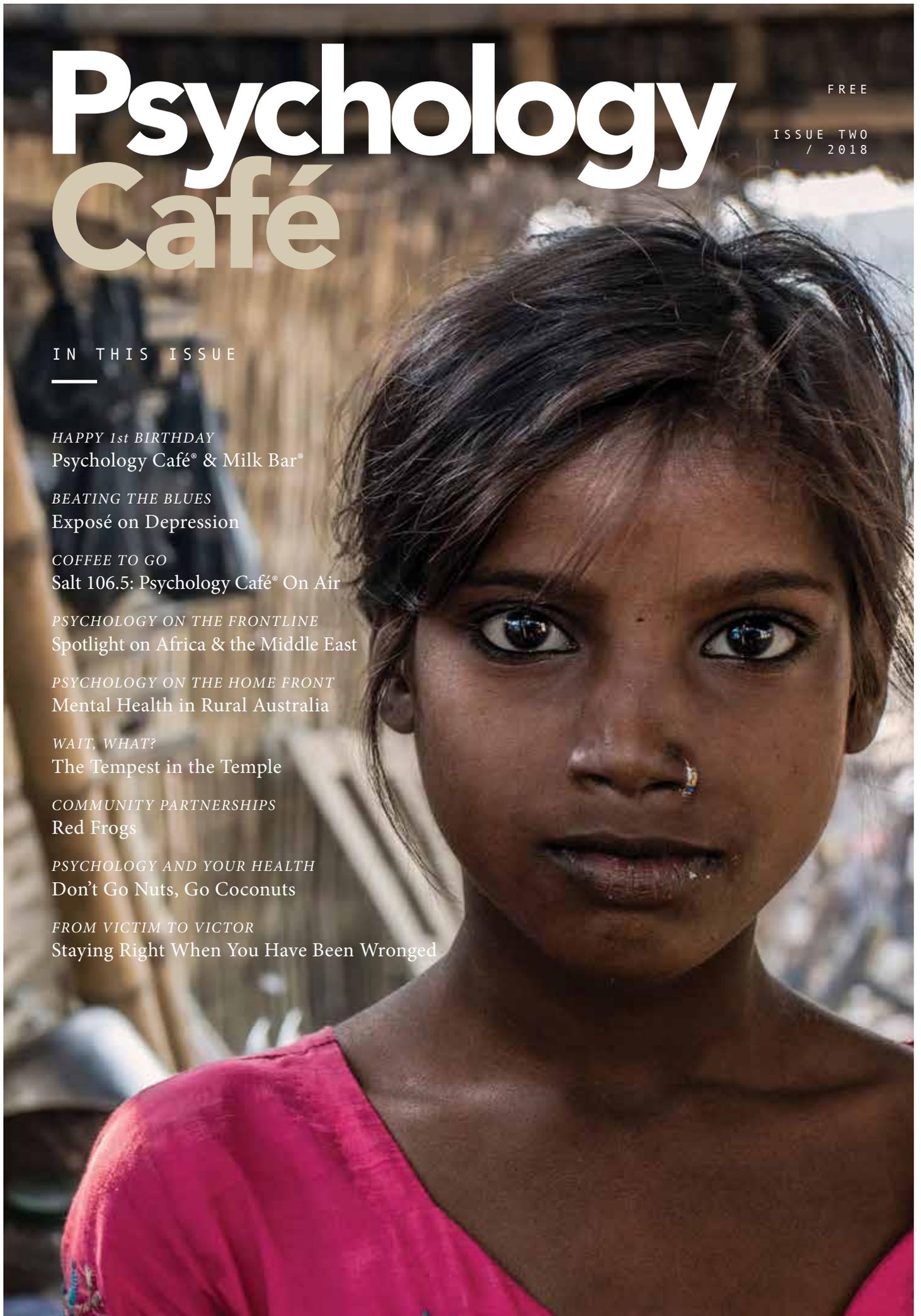
Red Frogs

PSYCHOLOGY AND YOUR HEALTH

Don't Go Nuts, Go Coconuts

FROM VICTIM TO VICTOR

Staying Right When You Have Been Wronged



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Cover Image: Wait, What? The Tempest in the Temple

The striking cover photo of a young Indian girl represents many Jogani girls just like her. The term 'Jogini' is given to girls who are trapped in 'temple sex-slavery' in Southern India. Almost all Jonai girls are Dalits (formerly known as the untouchables); a group of people segregated by a socially imposed caste system. Psychology Cafe® project partner, Destiny Rescue, is one organisation helping to rescue and rehabilitate these girls. Feature Story 'The Tempest in the Temple' is found on Page 24. (NB: 'Tempest' definition: a violent windy storm)

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Happy 1st Birthday



For many, the stigma attached to accessing mental health services is enough to make seeing a Psychologist a daunting prospect. However, that's all recently changed. The traditional doctor's office is 'OUT' and the new relaxed café environment is 'IN'.

Master practitioners in Clinical Psychology on Queensland's Sunshine Coast have broken the mould of traditional mental health service delivery. The world's first Psychology Café® for adults and youth, and the all new Psychology Milk Bar® for kids, represents a radical shake up of mental health service delivery.

In an intentional effort to de-stigmatise mental health and make effective psychology services available to everyone, Mooloolaba-based Clinical Psychologists have been inviting their clients in for coffee and important conversations. The first

trial year of the Psychology Café® and Psychology Milk Bar® is up, the results are in and the positive feedback has been overwhelming.

Consultations at the Psychology Café® are by appointment only. Much like booking a table at a restaurant, clients book an appointment in one of the stylish café consultation booths. The booths feature soundproofed frosted glass fronts, which let in just the right amount of light, music and café atmosphere, while still maintaining privacy and confidentiality. According to Dr Robi Sonderegger, the aim of the Psychology Café® is to create an environment that embodies a relaxed setting – one that people feel is friendly and comfortable. "There's no place quite like the safe and familiar environment of a café to discuss challenges, learn strategies and resolve personal problems", said Dr Robi.

Hanging out in trendy cafés with trusted companions to decompress and build relationships has long been a favourite Aussie pastime. The Psychology Café® now offers the Sunshine Coast community (and beyond) the opportunity to do the same, but with the unbiased counsel and expertise of a qualified Clinical Psychologist.

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milk bar booth, tapping away to child friendly tunes on the retro jukebox. A dynamic team of qualified professionals (Masters degree minimum), specialising in a range of child development issues, offer not only individual consultations but also a range of resilience-based group therapy and educational classes.

Whether in the Psychology Café® and Psychology Milk Bar®, clients have the option to come in for a 'single-shot' (25-minutes) or 'double-shot' (50-minutes) appointment. With a Medicare Mental Health Care Plan in place (referred by a medical practitioner), the upshot of flexible session times is minimal out of pocket expense. "This revolution in mental health service delivery is professional yet personal, social yet private, innovative yet inviting", said Dr Robi. "The relaxing difference is something to experience".



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- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Self-Esteem
- Stress Management
- Trauma

Exposé on Depression

BY LAURA SCHERMAN, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Depression, or 'Major Depression' as it is officially named, is so much more than a momentary change in mood. Rather than just 'feeling depressed' (used as a common catchphrase), a person's functioning is affected by a host of indicators that range in severity. Symptoms may include a pervasive or unremitting sadness, sleep disturbance (typically characterised by early morning insomnia), reduced interest in previously enjoyed activities, poor concentration, appetite changes, weight changes, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt, fatigue, loss of libido, and in some cases, thoughts of suicide.

In Australia, around 1 million people are estimated to experience depression each year. As such, it's likely that most of us know someone who has experienced depression (or perhaps we have experienced it ourselves). The World Health Organization predicts mental illness will be the second leading contributor to the global disease burden by 2020, with Major Depression already listed as the world's leading cause of disability. If this is the case, we would do well to try better understand not only why it occurs, but also how to beat the blues.

Various factors can contribute to the development of depression, including difficult life circumstances, genetic susceptibility, personality (i.e. perfectionism or self-criticism), diet and lifestyle factors, serious medical illness, maladaptive thought patterns, lack of purpose and life-meaning, drug

and alcohol use, social isolation, and even seasonal change.

The gold standard treatment for depression is Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). This short-term therapy helps clients become aware of various unhelpful mental processes and behaviours that maintain depressive features. While there are a number of other treatment modalities that have also been found effective in reducing the symptoms of depression (including ACT and Schema therapies, as well as SSRI and Tricyclic Antidepressant medication), CBT is an empowerment therapy - equipping clients with life-long cognitive, physiological and behavioural skills designed to overcome factors that reinforce depression.

The cycle of depression is often difficult for people to break by themselves and is especially challenging if symptoms have been present for some time. Left unchecked, depression can lead to a downward spiral of negative thinking, behaviour and mood. Therefore, the sooner help is sought the better. It's best to seek the support of a qualified professional, such as a Clinical Psychologist. The professionals at the Psychology Café® and Psychology Milk Bar® are specifically trained to address the debilitating effects of depression, as well as equip people with motivational techniques for sustainable mental health. With the right help and guidance, people not only have the capacity to overcome their depressive symptoms, but also to live satisfying and full lives.

When it comes to beating the blues, it's one thing to identify and treat depressive symptoms, but it's a whole other thing to advance mental health. To help prevent depression and promote emotional wellbeing, here are some effective mental health lifestyle tips:

1 / EXERCISE

When we feel down, fatigued and socially withdrawn, getting out to exercise is typically the last thing we feel like doing. However, just 15-30 minutes of moderate exercise at least three times per week is enough to energise your mind and mood. Choose an activity that interests you, or just open the front door and simply start walking. Regular exercise pumps all those feel-good hormones (called endorphins) around the body and helps burn off the negative effects of excessive stress hormones in your body. Go with a friend - it helps you stay accountable.

2 / EAT REGULARLY + WELL

When we feel down, we may overeat or under eat, or eat foods that pick us up momentarily, but may make us tired in the long run (only serving to further compound our low mood). Reduce your sugar intake and eat plenty of protein and complex carbs. As a general rule, fish is brain food (containing OMEGA 3 fatty acids), and poultry is mood food (containing Tryptophan). To fuel our brain and balance blood sugar, our bodies generally need three meals a day, with small healthy snacks in between such as fruit and nuts. Above all, keep well hydrated.

3 / STAY CONNECTED

We all need social connection to various degrees. Relational connections provide an effective protective factor against depression. Even when you don't feel like it, push yourself to go out and see your friends or reach out to someone. Friends are great to share challenges with. As the saying goes, a problem shared is a problem halved. Friends can help distract us from our negative thinking, bring new helpful perspectives, and offer practical support. However, also seek to help out and be there for your friends too. Focusing outwards (not just inwards) can help break patterns of negative self-focus.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE EXPERIENCING DEPRESSION, DON'T DELAY IN SEEKING PROFESSIONAL CARE. CALL PSYCHOLOGY CAFÉ® (07 54780202) OR VISIT WWW.PSYCHOLOGYCAFE.COM.AU TO ENQUIRE ABOUT GETTING THE RIGHT KIND OF HELP TODAY.

4 / SLEEP

Good sleep improves memory function, energy and overall mood. For good sleep hygiene, consider the following recommendations:

- Be sure to get 7-9 hours of sleep each night
- Have consistent sleep and wake times (neither too late to bed nor late to rise)
- Wind down before bed (have a consistent routine)
- Refrain from alcohol at least 2 hours before bed
- Disconnect from all digital screens (TV/computer/tablets/games/phones) at least 30 minutes before bed (and don't reconnect before morning)
- Sleep in a dark quiet room (avoiding mid-sleep disturbances)
- Don't nap during the day
- Refrain from caffeine use after 3pm (caffeine has a six-hour half-life - which means you still have half the amount of caffeine in your system six hours after your last cuppa).
- No matter what, don't check your clock in the middle of the night! Resist the temptation. Calculating how many hours you have left before your alarm goes off only stimulates your mind and makes it harder to fall back to sleep.

If you still find it difficult to get to sleep, wake regularly or oversleep, chat with your Psychologist about developing a tailored sleep strategy.

5 / RENEW YOUR MIND

What we think and allow our mind to dwell on will significantly impact our mood. Whatever impacts our mood will, in turn, impact our decisions and behaviours. Start to notice patterns in your mind and challenge those thoughts which are 'unhelpful' or 'untrue'. Psychologists are particularly good at helping people recognise unhelpful thought patterns. By applying various strategies to break negative thought patterns, positive solutions are better able to come into focus. With practice, you can master your mind, change your brain, and transform your life.



Psychology Café® On Air



Psychology Café® partners with local radio station Salt 106.5 to bring a message of hope to families across the Sunshine Coast (and North Brisbane).

With the fastest growing listener base in the region, the station Salt 106.5 is known for broadcasting ‘life changing radio’ 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is a station that promotes faith, family and fun. A staggering 42,000 people (equivalent to the Gabba being filled to capacity) tune in regularly to hear uplifting music, instructional ministry, supportive family programmes, news and listener interaction. One distinguishing thing about Salt 106.5 is their audience. Rather than passive listeners, market research has revealed an intentional involvement on behalf of listeners, who report a sense of belonging to the ‘on air’ (and now on-line) community.

“One of my favourite things about Salt 106.5 is their community, family and personal focus”, said Dr Robi (Psychology Café® founder). “I know few other stations or programs that have such a commitment to advancing and promoting mental, emotional and relational health”.

For many years, Dr Robi has been broadcast on radio around the world, across diverse networks and programs. But since returning to Australia in 2016, he’s been a regular feature on the ‘Morning Wake Up’. The three-way banter between breakfast announcers Jo Bouris and Kristian Macfarlane, and Clinical Psychologist Dr Robi is a mix of wisdom, humour and of course, coffee! “Obviously, Dr Robi is having an impact globally,” said Jo. “But we also get to share his wisdom and insight every week on topics that speak into our local Sunshine Coast audience.” According to Kristian, the weekly recipes and remedies dished out on Breakfast Radio that aim to help people with real life challenges, is like food for the soul. It starts with a portion of good advice, is sprinkled

with insightful facts and then is mixed together with moving stories. Yet, it always ends with a healthy dash of laughter!

Over morning coffee, the trio tackle some of the most hard-pressing issues faced by Sunshine Coast families. We all have questions in life,” said Kristian. “Some are more complex than others, requiring deeper understanding and more sophisticated answers. That’s where the help of Dr Robi comes in.” In their regular drive-time morning Q&A sessions, community members phone or text through questions (often anonymously or names changed to protect privacy) to be answered on air. According to Jo, they know when something has resonated with the audience as the phone starts beeping with messages. This is especially true for topics related to children (for example, childhood anxiety and ADHD). “At Salt 106.5 our Q&A time with Dr Robi is not only the highlight of my week but surveys show it’s the highlight of many other local Sunny Coasters”, said Kristian.

The most popular questions and pertinent advice are also posted online (podcast via App) for listeners to share this life-changing information with friends and family. An impressive 60% of listeners report ‘improved decision making’ as a result of the valuable information and advice they receive through the station’s programming. “We love that we get to partner with Dr Robi to bring real answers that line up with our faith for challenges that listener’s face every day,” said Jo. The station’s motto of helping families live a ‘fresh full life’ is not just a tagline, but a genuine commitment to the Sunshine Coast.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SALT 106.5 OR DOWNLOAD THEIR APP, VISIT WWW.SALT1065.COM

Interview with Maarten Pansier

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST / BSC(PSYCH), MSC(SOCPSYCH), MSC(CLINPSYCH)

Maarten is a Clinical Psychologist from The Netherlands who has recently joined the Psychology Café® and Psychology Milk Bar® team in Mooloolaba. To get to know him a little bit better, we asked Maarten a few personal questions.

WHY DID YOU MOVE TO AUSTRALIA TO WORK?

I've wanted to live and work abroad for a long time. As a Psychologist, I was always interested in supporting organisations that work with survivors of war, natural disasters or human trafficking. So, when the opportunity came to move to Australia and work with the Psychology Café® (who sponsor trauma rehabilitation projects around the world), I knew this was the moment that it would all come together. And I am really grateful that I get to live and work here.

WHAT'S ONE THING YOU ARE PROFESSIONALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT?

Gold... not in the sense of the metal or the money, but rather another type of gold. The kind of gold that is inside everybody, including you and me. I believe that somewhere in everyone there's something that is true, authentic, gracious and beautiful. A treasure. But often hidden and locked. I'm passionate about seeing that gold burst into life again!

WHAT'S ONE OF YOUR FAVOURITE PSYCHOLOGY 'READS'?

Actually, I'm not much of a reader and I prefer watching movies. An example of a great movie from a psychological view is the old movie '12 Angry Men' where a lot of different aspects about group dynamics

are beautifully presented. When I do read, I like the work of Professor Brené Brown, in particular her book 'The Power of Vulnerability'.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A PSYCHOLOGIST?

For me, becoming a Psychologist was a process. Because I am interested by so many things, I had a little trouble choosing this discipline. I started out by studying a broad range of general courses, however, the psychology course interested me the most. The more I pursued specific studies in psychology, the more the desire grew in me to equip and empower people to live a psychologically healthy life.

HOW DO YOU LIKE TO RELAX WHEN YOU'RE NOT AT WORK?

When I'm not at work, I really love to hang out with friends and do life together with them. I also like to hang out at the beach, watch a movie and play sport.

YOU GIVE ADVICE, BUT WHAT'S ONE OF THE BEST PIECES OF ADVICE YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN?

'Don't let your past determine your future.'

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE PSYCHOLOGY CAFÉ® AND PSYCHOLOGY MILK BAR®?

Back in Amsterdam, where I lived before moving to Australia, I was always connecting with people over a coffee and wanted to provide mental health services in the same kind of atmosphere. I can't believe I now actually get to do that. I love to help people in an atmosphere that breathes life.



PSYCHOLOGY ON THE FRONTLINE

Africa and the Middle East

BY ERIN CLOUT, PSYCHOLOGY INTERN

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) declared it to be the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Between 30,000-50,000 children were abducted in Northern Uganda by rebels to be used as child-soldiers and sex slaves. Moved by the plight of these children, Carl and Julie Gaede, psychotherapists from Wisconsin in the US, first came to work with Dr Robi Sonderegger's EMPOWER trauma rehabilitation program (sponsored by the Psychology Café®) more than a decade ago. What they experienced was both gruesome and gratifying. They witnessed some of the most severely traumatised people on earth experience true healing and radical transformation. Shortly after in 2008, the Gaede's, along with their two young children, permanently relocated to Uganda to establish their own humanitarian organisation called Tutapona (which in Swahili means, "We will be healed"). Tutapona focuses exclusively on addressing the emotional effects of war and conflict. Using the EMPOWER trauma rehabilitation program, Tutapona has now rehabilitated more than 37,000 civil war survivors.



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Over the past 9 years, Tutapona has expanded their services beyond Uganda, to work with war-affected Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees from South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Currently, Tutapona has over 20 Ugandan staff members in 4 field offices, serving refugees from throughout Central and East Africa.

Most recently, Tutapona expanded their operations to the Middle East to address the emotional needs of the Syrian refugee crisis. They currently have 3 teams and 12 staff operating in Kurdistan, Iraq and have found the need in this part of the world to be significant. "There are so many needs in this region and we hope to expand our work to have teams in additional locations," urged Carl. "We are currently exploring how to develop a team that is based closer to Mosul to work with the large number of people flooding out of this last ISIS stronghold".

Not only is Tutapona supporting the emotional needs of the refugees fleeing Mosul, they are hoping to set up teams within Syria and support the staggering amount of IDPs. Many Syrian

people have been displaced from their homes due to violence but are trapped within the country and are unable to get out. Carl and Julie are currently seeking the financial provision to roll out urgently needed mental health services to these communities right where they are.

Tutapona have been long standing partners with Dr Robi Sonderegger. Recently, Carl collaborated with a team of experts at the Psychology Café® to help develop a brand new posttraumatic growth-based program called GROW. "Both EMPOWER and GROW are different from other curriculum [treatment programs] I have seen in that they use evidence-based ways to empower and equip lay practitioners to facilitate therapy," says Carl. "Both programs are culturally sensitive and adaptable to the specific cultural context in each location. I also really like how both programs have a focus on forgiveness and reconciliation, which is quite rare."

Carl describes the impact seen from EMPOWER and GROW as remarkable, with participants developing renewed hope for their future, seeing relationships restored, and ultimately having





significantly fewer symptoms associated with posttraumatic stress (i.e. PTSD; including less anxiety and depression, fewer intrusive thoughts, and improved sleep function). Because trauma recovery and mental health improvements are validated through standardised measures, this therapeutic initiative has become the largest ever formal mental health service provided in war zone settings.

Tutapona is truly on the frontlines of trauma rehabilitation. Albeit inspiring, the work that the Gaede family are a part of in Africa and the Middle East is not always easy – especially with a young family. Moving away from friends and family, as well as giving up many material comforts, are just some of the many sacrifices the family has and continues to make. However, from their standpoint, they believe they have gained so much more than they have given up. “Our whole family considers it a privilege to live among and serve the people who have suffered so much. To play a small part in the emotional healing of communities who have been traumatised by war is a profound honour.”

As Carl and Julie continue to expand their impact across the Middle Eastern and African regions, the Psychology Café® team remains committed to

supporting their work through staff development and training, clinical supervision and financial support (\$120,000 commitment over three years – through the Family Challenge Charitable Trust).

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GAEDE FAMILY AND THE INSPIRING WORK OF TUTAPONA, VISIT WWW.TUTAPONA.COM YOU CAN ALSO DIRECTLY HELP US FINANCIALLY SUPPORT TUTAPONA’S TRAUMA REHABILITATION SERVICES BY MAKING A DONATION HERE: WWW.FAMILYCHALLENGE.COM.AU (ALL DONATIONS OVER \$2 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE)



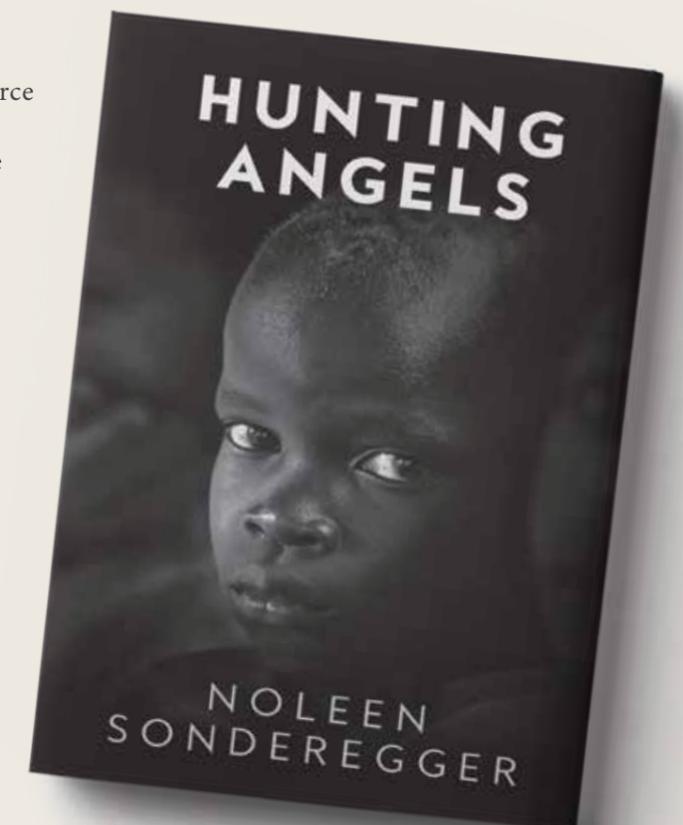
A NEWLY RELEASED NOVEL BY NOLEEN SONDEREGGER

Hunting Angels

A savage militant cult known as the LRA (Lord’s Resistance Army) plundered Northern Uganda of its most precious resource for many years. Not its gold or diamonds or other pricey gems, but its children. Over the years an estimated 1.7 million people were forced to flee their homes, taking refuge in more than 200 internally displaced person (IDP) camps.

An estimated 60,000 Acholi children were abducted in the region and recruited into military ranks or sold as sex slaves to rebel fighters. Many escaped, however the broad majority were not so fortunate, being subject to sexual violence, mutilation and torture on a scale that shocked the world.

Silvia and Amos are two innocent Acholi children whose lives are turned upside down after they are both abducted by the LRA. Like so many in Northern Uganda, they lose everything they have ever known and loved. Their lives cross paths with Grace and her young son Sante who was born into the rebel group. *Hunting Angels* is a tapestry of tragedy and triumph that will allow you to glimpse both the depravity of civil war and the courage of the human spirit. This is the story that most children from Northern Uganda never got to tell.



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ALL PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THIS BOOK ARE DEDICATED TO HELPING SURVIVORS OF WAR, NATURAL DISASTER AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.

PSYCHOLOGY ON THE HOME FRONT

Spotlight on Rural Mental Health

BY CLAUDETTE OGILVIE, PSYCHOLOGIST

Can you imagine living in a place where everyone in town knows your business? A place where your livelihood is almost entirely dependent on favourable weather conditions... conditions that may not be so favourable right now? Now try coupling that with not being able to easily access the medical or mental health services you need, left alone and not having someone to talk to who isn't facing the same stressors. This is the reality of many Australians living outside of major cities. In addition to a range of stressors that are unique to remote and rural families, regional Australians often forgo many of the basic services that those living in major metropolitan areas take for granted.

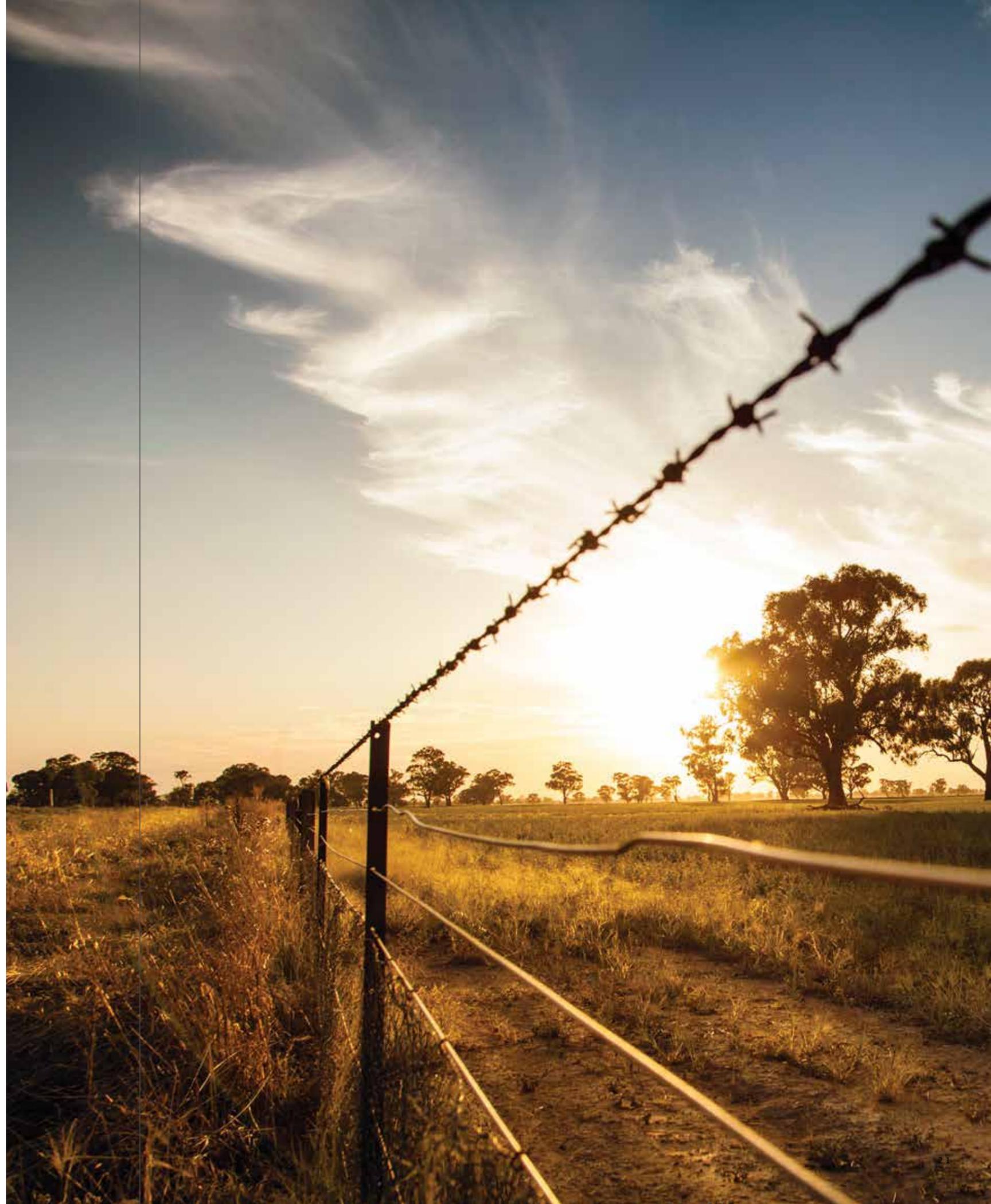
Although mental illness does not discriminate based on who you are or where you live, if you live outside of a major Australian city (that is, in regional or remote Australia), according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) you are 16% more likely to have experienced symptoms of (or have been diagnosed with) a mental disorder at some point in your life. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare also reports rural Australians to habitually consume more nicotine, alcohol and illicit drugs (per capita), with overall higher levels of self-harm. Despite Australia's suicide rate being significantly higher among people living in remote and rural Australia (twice as high as the Australian average in very remote places), access to quality medical and mental health services is markedly more restricted compared to those in urban Australia. Apart from the Royal Flying Doctors Service and occasional regional clinics, psychiatric care is severely restricted. While

mental health services are sometimes available in larger regional towns, gaining access to a qualified Clinical Psychologist in rural Australia has been typically next to impossible. That is, until now.

The Australian Government has recently approved a Telehealth Initiative which allows remote and rural Australians to access seven Medicare-rebatable professional psychology consultations per year (via video conferencing technology). Unfortunately, the policy is still highly restrictive. In order to qualify for Medicare rebates, one of the first four consultations is required to be face-to-face (requiring clients to drive or fly extended distances).

With some of our Psychologists being 'country at heart', we seek to understand and respond to the ongoing hardships that can be experienced to our kin folk 'out west'. The Psychology Café® and Psychology Milk Bar® currently provide online clinical psychology services nationally (to remote and rural Australians). Families navigate the challenge of having to travel and attend occasional face-to-face consultations at the Psychology Café® and Psychology Milk Bar® by taking extended holidays on the beautiful Sunshine Coast. However, we are committed to repaying the favour. Each year, Clinical Psychologists from our team spend time travelling in regional Queensland and New South Wales to provide Mental Health awareness, education and training.

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CELEBRATION POINT

USC – Best Psychology Program in the Nation

Congratulations to Professor Mary Katsikitis and Faculty of Arts and Business and Law at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC). In the 2018 Good Universities Guide, the USC Discipline of Psychology was ranked 'best program' in the nation for public universities in Australia and USC's psychology program is one of the youngest. As such, Professor Mary Katsikitis (Psychology Discipline Leader), believes this No.1 category ranking is not just good for the University's reputation, but the Sunshine Coast at large.



"We were all delighted to learn that psychology at USC won the top spot as well as five out of five stars when its overall student experience was compared to psychology programs across the nation," said Professor Mary Katsikitis. This not only represents a significant encouragement for academic staff and students, but also community partners who mentor and supervise Masters and Doctoral-level students. USC psychology postgraduate student Graham Kell (currently on placement with the Psychology Café*) says, "I am thrilled the USC Discipline of Psychology has won such a prestigious award. The quality of graduates being produced by USC really matches the level of education on offer".

On behalf of the entire Psychology Café* and Psychology Milk Bar* team, we'd like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Professor Mary Katsikitis and her team, for their dedication to our discipline (Psychology), for raising the 'quality education' bar and for producing such high calibre Psychologists that go on to serve our community.

PSYCHOLOGY café **PSYCHOLOGY milkbar**

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WAIT, WHAT?

The Tempest in the Temple

BY NOLEEN SONDEREGGER, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

We all want to believe in the best that humanity has to offer. We want to stand on goodness like an unshakable foundation. We want to celebrate the powerful, the perfect and the strong. We want heroes, victories and celebrities. When we post our pictures on social media, we don't typically send our suffering out into cyberspace. Mostly, we take photos of our best moments and place a filter over the top in an attempt to make what is already good, look perfect. We can try to live behind the painted facade of a perfect life, with perfect Instagram pictures and perfect Facebook friends, but deep down we all know... it's 'fake news'.

Across the surface of this perfect veneer there are stories in the world that lay like shadows. Stories of loss, heartache and sorrow. They are right there before our eyes, but the mind somehow tries to convince us that they're not real, or perhaps, not our problem. All that pain and suffering... it's best to have it stay in the corner with its face to the wall.

We might get philosophical about it and even question why God allows it to exist – shifting responsibility. But we leave it there. Silence it, deny it, ignore it and medicate it with ignorance and indifference. For goodness sake don't acknowledge it or ask questions about what we can do. Don't even let your eyes glance at it, for it might make them sting like they've been exposed to the inner rings of an onion. If you are successful at keeping a wall between you and tide of human suffering, then you may just be okay. However, there's one tiny little problem with establishing our own virtual reality...

It's. Not. Real.

I was challenged by this on a recent trip to Hyderabad, India. To be honest, I hadn't really wanted to go. If the trip had fallen through at the last minute I wouldn't have been disappointed. It was the beginning of the school year and I'd just returned home from a holiday with my husband and five kids. I wanted to settle down and get comfortable. Get back into routine and enjoy the last of the Australian summer. That's what I wanted (just being honest). However, when the request came in to conduct trauma recovery training for health workers in India, I knew it was something I couldn't, or perhaps shouldn't, ignore.

So... I came to Hyderabad to facilitate training for Destiny Rescue staff in the use and application of

the EMPOWER trauma rehabilitation program. EMPOWER was written by my husband Dr Robi Sonderegger, over ten years ago. Its purpose was to take what we knew about Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), break it down into simple yet practical therapeutic sessions, and equip indigenous facilitators in foreign lands. The program was first developed for use in East Africa, during a time of civil war. A tempest storm was raging with rebel militia building an army of children who faced wickedness of the worst kind. A time when the worst of humanity was on display, in a location where children were pawns on a chessboard of political corruption. Yet even in the darkest of places and at the worst of times, we saw the brightest of lights radiating hope for the masses. With a coalition of committed humanitarian organisations using EMPOWER, over the course of one of the darkest decades of East Africa's history, we saw the rehabilitation of more than 100,000 formerly abducted child soldiers, sex slaves and war affected community members. Skip forward to a new decade. I'm now in a different continent, yet I perceive a familiar scene. Amid the children, there she is... Jogini.

Joginis are temple prostitutes. Girls as young as five begin the process of dedication to the temple which culminates in a 'devadasi' conversion ceremony, where she marries a Hindu deity (goddess) and becomes the 'property' of the village. From the age of eight through puberty, Joginis are initiated into temple prostitution – for life. Historically, Joginis were paid by royal clientele, some even enjoying a high status. The culture of the devadasi was even tempered by rich displays of



song and artistic dance (typically used as part of temple worship). However, today the brutal reality is that Joginis have no rights, live in extreme poverty, and are used sexually (or otherwise) by anyone, anywhere, and at any time – until they are deemed too old for use, or until they're dead. Although the practice of dedicating girls to the temple goddess is now technically illegal, an estimated 200,000 girls remain trapped in sex slavery as the practice continues.

Wait, what?

How is it possible I could not have known this?

As I first met and spoke with the Joginis, they told me one horrifying story after another. It all left me feeling quite numb and unsure of how to process it all. As an outsider, it's easy to look on at such practices and be appalled. However, at the same time as my heart was breaking, Joginis inspired me. The ones who survived had become strong women. They smiled, they looked after one another as best they could, and they had begun standing up for other girls by putting a stop to 'dedication ceremonies' of young girls before they could take place. After experiencing the most unspeakable atrocities, how is it they had that kind of fight left in them?

If you don't know, it's easy not to care. But once you know, how can you not care? Sympathy, in and of itself, offers no hope. Compassion on the other hand is different. Compassion is difficult as it requires us to

suffer together with others. Compassion hurts, but it also heals. For with compassion comes conviction, and conviction leads to change.

To really care, you have to put aside the 'perfect-life-illusion' for just a minute. It requires you to face the raw truth. When the blinkers are removed and the perfection-filter is tuned off, you start to see... really see. Yes, you may see suffering; it dims your soul like an encroaching storm, but if you squint and pull the sharp light into focus, beyond the clouds a new perspective may emerge. Don't be surprised if you discover hope for humanity is located much closer than you thought it would be. Don't be surprised if you're lead by the hand and you hear the whisper "be the change..." Perhaps it's time to start considering that maybe... just maybe... giving the smallest cup of water to someone in need, may be the best way to fill up your own bucket.

DESTINY RESCUE IS AN ORGANISATION THAT WORKS IN MANY DIFFERENT ASIAN NATIONS, INCLUDING THAILAND, CAMBODIA AND INDIA. THEIR GOAL IS TO RESCUE GIRLS FROM SEX TRAFFICKING AND PROSTITUTION BY GIVING THEM SKILLS, EDUCATION AND ULTIMATELY HOPE FOR A FUTURE. BY THE END OF 2018 THEY PLAN TO ESTABLISH THREE SEPARATE HOMES FOR THE DAUGHTERS OF JOGINIS (GIRLS WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE TRAPPED IN THE SAME SEX-SLAVERY AS THEIR MOTHERS). TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DESTINY RESCUE AND GET INVOLVED, VISIT WWW.DESTINYRESCUE.ORG

Don't Go Nuts, Go Coconuts

BY SARAH HARRIOTT, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST



it is mostly composed of small and medium-chain triglycerides, which are readily burned in the body and dissipated as energy. Other saturated fats (like animal fats) are long-chain triglycerides and take much longer to burn off. In addition, VCO remains very stable when heated, reducing the production of harmful chemicals when used for high-heat frying.

VCO AND THE BRAIN

A number of studies have found positive links between VCO and memory function. Research has even shown

that it can dramatically improve brain function and memory in people with Alzheimer's and Dementia. As such, some doctors are now beginning to prescribe VCO as a natural preventative measure and treatment for these conditions. But how does it work? To put it simply, VCO is like fuel for your brain. When the fat in VCO is converted by the body into energy, it produces Ketones which are essential for healthy cognitive function and memory recall. When we ingest VCO, the Ketones give our brain the energy it needs to function at its best. Results of VCO on brain function and memory recall are almost immediate, as it is like giving the brain an instant fuel boost! However, studies show that the effects of VCO on memory are short-term, lasting an average of 8 hours, so VCO is best taken as part of a healthy daily diet.

HOW IS VCO BEST ENJOYED?

A simple, natural and delicious addition to your diet might just help to clear the brain fog and boost your energy for the day! Not only is VCO good for you, but it's also delicious! Try add it to your smoothie or yoghurt, use it to make protein balls, or substitute it for your normal cooking oils when making a stir-fry. But best of all, try stirring a spoonful of VCO into your coffee. When you are next in at the Psychology Café® ask for a 'coconut house special' – you might be pleasantly surprised.

Over the past few years, Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) has been hailed a “healthier” alternative to other oils. With medium-chain fatty acids, VCO is heart-smart. It is lower in cholesterol and trans-fats, which means it's not just good for the waistline, but recent studies have found that Virgin Coconut Oil provides many health benefits, including:

- Improving the brain's memory function (short-term), including in patients suffering from Alzheimer's and Dementia
- Improving the body's use of insulin
- Improving cholesterol by increasing HDL (good cholesterol)
- Boosting thyroid function resulting in increased energy
- Acting as an antioxidant and natural antibiotic
- Boosting the immune system
- Improving overall health of skin and hair

WHAT IS VIRGIN COCONUT OIL?

Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) is a heart-healthy oil (free from trans-fats) that has been shown to improve cholesterol levels. It is extracted directly from fresh coconut meat and has a light coconut taste and smell. VCO is different to commercial coconut oils as it is less processed and no chemicals or bleach are used in its refining process. VCO is a saturated fat, however,

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 - Assertiveness: Negotiation skills & conflict resolution
 - Innovative Leadership: Core competencies for success
- **Psychology for Your Home**
 - Relationship Revolution: Intimacy ignition & interventions
 - Parenting Revolution: Less stress, more fun
- **Money Mindset: Habits of the Healthy, Wealthy & Wise**

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Red Frogs

BY MAARTEN PANSIER, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

It's the end of 1997. Twelve long years of school has come to an end. On the brink of adulthood (many now officially of drinking age), thousands of young school leavers have traveled to the Gold Coast to celebrate the annual Queensland right-of-passage called 'Schoolies'. The time to party has come. In the middle of the crowd stands a young man named Andy Gourley. He looks around at all the young people gathered and it hits him: there's an ocean of need here! During this alcohol filled and fueled time, Andy sees the lasting impact a few poor decisions could have on a young person's future. He sees the need to help those that may not be in a position to help themselves. Andy decides to stand up and be the big brother who looks out for the lost, the vulnerable and the outright wasted: the big brother, who in the right

moment, may be able to point a young person in a better direction. Though not having that name yet, the Red Frogs movement is born.

What started out with 17 volunteers and the distribution of 80kgs of Allen's Red Frogs lollies, 20 years later has grown into a non-profit organisation with locations all across Australia and the globe, with more than 4500 volunteers. In Australia alone, they distribute over 24 tonnes of Red Frogs each year, all donated by Allen's Lollies.

In Australia, Red Frogs has expanded services to reach young people before they even head to Schoolies, with high school seminars being regularly delivered on alcohol and drugs awareness, party and drinking culture, and sensible decision making. Their educational

programs also focus on personal safety, looking after your mates, and mental health awareness. Nowadays, Red Frogs are also present at all major Australian Universities and offer services to almost 150 residential colleges and halls. They are actively involved in sporting programs and skate culture, as well as offering direct relief and support to over 675 100 festival patrons each year (helping to prevent dehydration, among other things).

Wherever they are, they become a positive presence for young people, creating an even more safe and enjoyable environment while modeling healthy alternatives to unwise choices.

In recent years, the leaders of Red Frogs have noticed an increasing need for awareness and assistance in relation to mental health concerns among young Australians. As such, the Psychology Café® is excited to be partnering with Red Frogs to help the next generation of young Australians prepare for their future. In 2018, our Clinical Psychology team will be providing strategic consultation, supporting the development of new educational programs, delivering mental health awareness training, and receiving referrals for young people in need of professional psychology services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RED FROGS AUSTRALIA, SEE WWW.REDFROGS.COM.AU

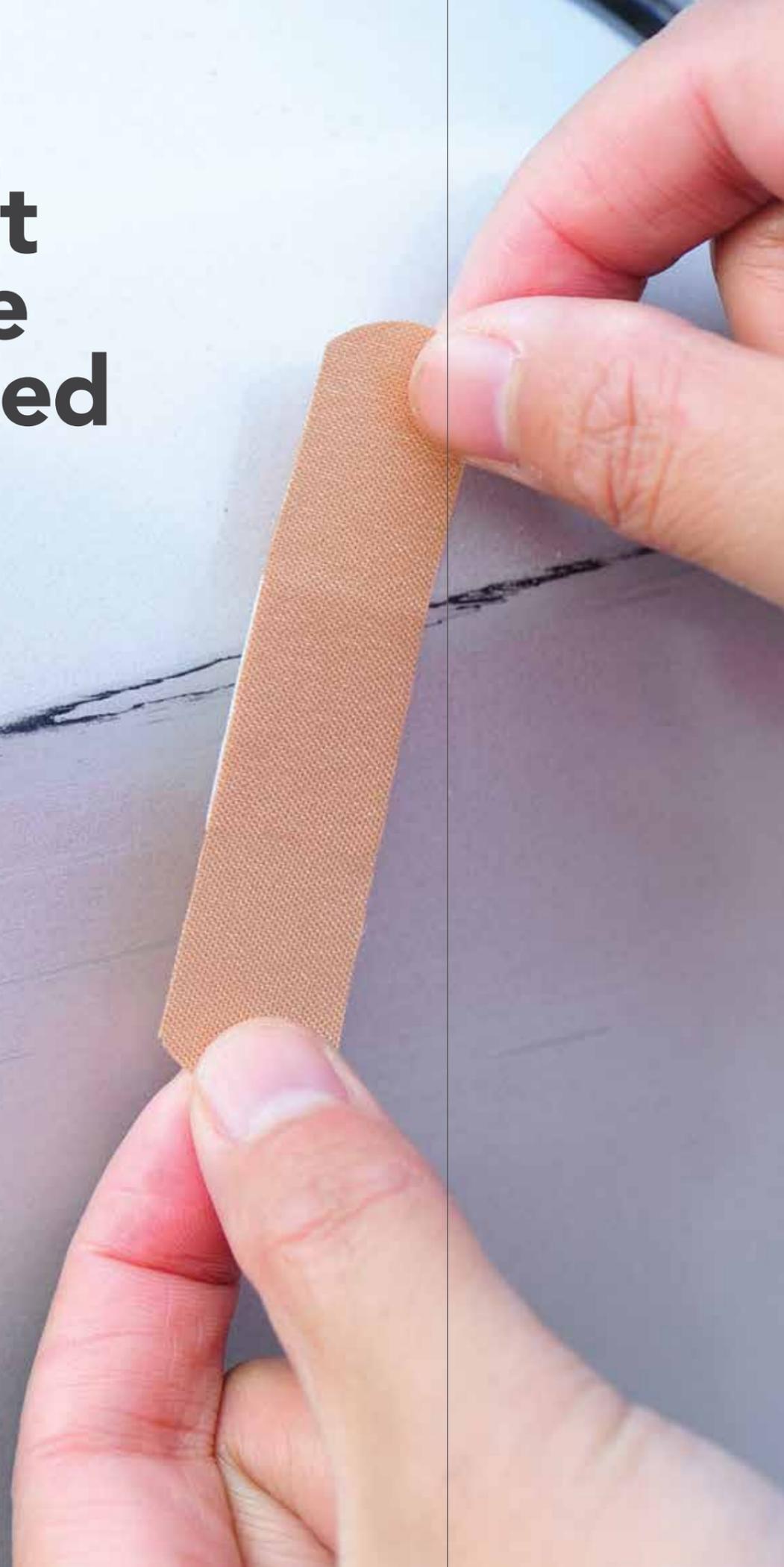
FROM VICTIM TO VICTOR

Staying Right When You've Been Wronged

BY NIKKI NUCIFORA, PSYCHOLOGIST

After saving for three years, Roger finally had put aside enough money for his dream car. After picking it up from the dealership, he proudly pulled around to the grocery store before heading to his friend's house to show off his new prized possession. As he returned to his car from the store, he marveled at how the fresh paint glistened in the afternoon sun. However, as he walked across the car park, drawing closer to his car, something caught his eye on the front passenger door. Upon proper inspection, he realised his brand-new car possessed a considerable dint and scrape that it did not have 10 minutes ago. It became strikingly obvious that someone had side-swiped and damaged his brand-new car. To Roger's dismay, there were no cars in the vicinity to be seen. Given that there was also no note left to apologise, explain or take responsibility, feelings of distress, bewilderment and outrage came over him. As Roger stood there thinking how unjust and unfair this 'hit and run' damage to his new car was, he at the same time was

presented with a choice as to how he would respond.



At one point or another in our lives, we have all had similar experiences to Roger – being wronged or unfairly treated. Injustice and offence typically result in a myriad of feelings ranging from disappointment to despair. However, research has shown that holding on to these emotions can be detrimental to our mental and physical health. Researchers from Hope College in Michigan found that individuals who hold on to a grudge fair significantly worse in their psychological and physical health compared to those who extend forgiveness towards offenders. A similar study from Stanford University in California highlighted that people who have been wronged and cultivate a victim mentality (nursing, cursing and rehearsing bad things that have happened), develop and display greater levels of perceived entitlement and ultimately more selfish behaviour. Several studies further highlight that unforgiving individuals, who may be angry, hostile, ruminating and attached to their victimhood, may also experience an erosion of social networks and support, as friends grow tired of attending to their misery.

When we have been wronged, our natural impulse may be to seek recompense, feeling entitled to compensation and justice. Yet in the process, we may be so wounded that we seek to retaliate, seek reprisal or get revenge. However, in seeking to destroy those who have hurt us, we inadvertently hurt ourselves in the process. While it may sound justified to want to eliminate the threat and therefore avoid the risk of further offence, psychological studies have repeatedly shown healing from our hurts has very little to do with 'demolishing' the perpetrator down and everything to do with 'developing' our own character, personal discipline and ultimately, the capacity to forgive.

As we reconcile our past, we are better able to get on with our future. The active process required for redemption and reconciliation is forgiveness. As we learn how to let go of our hurt, and make a daily conscious choice to no longer nurse our pain, curse the perpetrator or rehearse our resentment towards them, we move from victim to victory. In describing how to turn bad breaks into blessing, Maxine Schnall compares these two mentalities in her book, *What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger*:

DEMOLISHMENT (victim)	DEVELOPMENT (victory)
Uncertain how long it will take to feel good	Decides to feel good despite the circumstances
Grinds to a halt – being paralysed by pain	Keeps putting one foot in front of the other
Wallows in self-pity	Comforts others
Jealous of others' success	Inspired by others' success
Focuses on the pain of loss	Cherishes joyful memories
Seeks retribution	Seeks redemption

SOME SAY, THE FIRST FIVE WORDS YOU SEE DESCRIBE YOU BEST.

What Do You Think?

H R P H C U D D L Y Z V R E S T L E S P J S O
F C A R I N G H K I N D S S U Q M W R B Z A M
L R R J F G U N D E R S T A N D I N G F R S I
O G I G O R G E O U S E T A P A R T T U C S S
V R D E F F I C I E N T F O R G I V E N R Y C
I E I H N B V A D V E N T U R O U S M W E P H
N A S M E D A W E S O M E H O N E S T V A L I
G T C A L M L B C O U R A G E O U S I B T A E
B R A V E W U Y H O T B P S M A R T Q U I Y V
B O L D G T E N E L O Q U E N T I P Y U V F O
U J M B A B D F A B U L O U S S A V E D E U U
S Q F U N N Y M K C O O L Y O H E L P F U L S
Y B A S T U T E Y X C O M P A S S I O N A T E

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